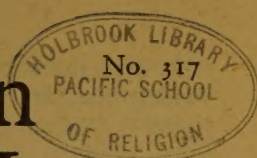


The Christian News-Letter

Edited by
KATHLEEN
BLISS



4th August, 1948

MANY OF OUR READERS will have seen or heard reference made to a report called *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male*, recently published in the United States and usually referred to because of the name of its chief author as "the Kinsey Report". Although there have been other reports on sex behaviour, nothing so thorough as this survey has ever been attempted. The work has had the sponsorship and financial backing of the University of Indiana and the Medical Division of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Nine years have been spent in recording 12,000 case histories, and the present volume is based mainly on the histories of the 5,300 white males in that 12,000. The chancy methods of written questionnaire have been abandoned in favour of personal interviews. The authors hope to examine 100,000 case histories in twenty years and to make a parallel study of female sex behaviour as they proceed. They have been in contact on the one hand with colleges and universities, hospitals, penal institutions, schools, church groups, family groups, clubs and communities, and on the other hand with specialists in many branches of medicine, in psychology, sociology and statistics for the understanding and arrangement of the material. This bulky report of 800 pages was not meant for the general public. Nevertheless, most people are so interested in how others conduct their personal lives,

NEWS-LETTER

THE KINSEY REPORT

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF
BROADCASTING

SUPPLEMENT

ON TRYING TO BE A
PSYCHIATRIST

BY

DESMOND POND

that both the book itself and popular digests of it have been widely read in America, and some reviews have appeared here.

There are two chief reasons why the Kinsey report should be taken seriously by Christians even outside America. One is for the facts it discloses. Here is a picture of how a cross section of men behave, not in a remote island being surveyed by anthropologists, but in the richest and most powerful country in the world. But what makes this report a phenomenon is not what it contains, but what it takes for granted. Underlying the whole inquiry and accepted without question is a view of man totally at variance not only with the Christian view, but with that held by most of the great sages and teachers of mankind. There can be no doubt that thousands will take the authors at their word in claiming that their view of man is objective, scientific and therefore true. If News-Letter readers are looking for practical examples of the conflict between Christianity and the modern world view which Professor Hodges has been outlining in his series of Supplements, they will find none more vitally important than this.

Sex behaviour and religious belief

Here are some of the salient facts given in the report. Dr. Kinsey and his fellow biologists reach the conclusion that 83 per cent of American males have sexual intercourse before marriage. They think it "probably safe to suggest that about half of all the married males have intercourse with women other than their wives, at some time while they are married". About a third of American males have homosexual experiences at some time in their lives. While these are the most startling general conclusions reached others are notable. Of these the chief is the establishment beyond all reasonable question, of the fact that different types of sexual behaviour belong to different social groups. Thus when the figures already given are analysed by social and educational groupings, it is found that the figure for pre-marital intercourse among college groups is 67 per cent among those of high school education it is 84 per cent, and

among those of grade school (primary school) level it reaches the high figure of 98 per cent. Other forms of sexual activity show equally marked divergences between social groups. What modifying effect has religious belief or membership of a Christian Church on sexual behaviour? Tables are given which break down the three main social groups into age groups and each age group into religious groups, active and inactive. The general conclusions reached are that marginal association with religion has no noticeable effect in modifying sexual behaviour. Active belief does have some modifying effect. Thus, for example, in the matter of pre-marital intercourse, between the ages of sixteen and twenty, of grade school boys, 85 per cent practise intercourse, of high school boys 76 per cent, of those of the college group 42 per cent. The figures for the active Protestants in those social groups are 70 per cent, 67 per cent and 27 per cent. Kinsey notes that as men who profess religious faith grow older their behaviour tends to approximate more closely to that of their social group.

How far are the facts given really trustworthy? There have been objections raised in scientific as well as in religious circles. The evidence was collected on the understanding of the strictest secrecy: the names are known to none but the three interviewers and there is no possibility of going over the evidence again. An American friend of the *News-Letter*, who has watched reactions to the report with considerable care, says: "The scientific validity of the findings has been sharply challenged by some, but the general disposition has been to accept the trustworthiness of the data. Even if maximum allowance be made for defective procedures in the accumulation and statistical summarization of the data, the report appears to reveal a practice of every type of immorality and perversion far exceeding the most gloomy judgment of those who thought themselves closely in touch with these matters."

The Kinsey report has become what one might call "substantive": no one is likely to have the resources to start out on another line of research: there will be modifications, but there is hardly likely to be a total reversal.

The report has had a shattering effect in religious circles in America. It is clear from the detailed statistics given at end of the volume, that active Catholics have either refused to give evidence or have not been sought. This is a serious omission both in view of the total strength of the Roman Church in America and even more so because that Church is, far more than any of the other Churches, the Church of the wage-earning classes. In Protestant circles there has been considerable alarm: if Kinsey is right, or even half right, there is a considerable falling below the Church's standards within the Church itself. Social custom, it seems, has a stronger control on sexual behaviour than personal religious belief, and this has been to many a very dispiriting discovery—as it would be to many Christians in this country.

But there is another side to this question. It does seem as though perhaps most present-day Christians only half believe all the things that Christian doctrine and the saints in all ages (as well as the sinners) say about the immense, almost ungovernable, power of the Flesh. Those who find Kinsey shocking might try a course of Luther's sermons, where the power of the Flesh is described in unqualified terms. There has been widespread talk in religious circles in America of an "appalling decline from accepted moral standards". We know how the Church thought men *ought* to behave 200 or 100 or 25 years ago: do we, and can we ever know how they *did* behave? Can we go any further than to say that modern American society provides probably greater opportunities for illicit sexual behaviour than the old established communities of Europe where people were known to each other? Furthermore, seeing that sex is by its nature *social* behaviour, ought we not to expect that religion would have its greatest effect not by lifting isolated persons clean out of their social environment and causing them to behave differently from their social group, but by moulding, over long periods of history, those very social customs and morals which powerfully affect the individual. America is a new country, mainly made up of those who have, or whose ancestors have, fled from old established communities in search of a larger freedom. That in the

leading group in America, the college-educated class, social customs and sanctions rooting back into 2,000 years of Christian history and beyond that into the Old Testament, should be the dominant form of behaviour is not a small but a staggering thing.

The Kinsey Man

We now come to what is the most powerful objection to the whole report, its false presuppositions. Dr. Kinsey set out to find "data about sex which would represent an accumulation of scientific fact completely divorced from questions of moral value and social custom . . . The present study", he continues in his introduction, "represents an attempt to accumulate an objectively determined body of fact about sex which strictly avoids social or moral interpretations." He is convinced that religion and moral and social custom are something added to man, and that if he could only scrape off these top layers, underneath he would find something which represents the sexual behaviour of the mammal Man. "In many instances," he says, "variant types of behaviour represent the basic mammalian patterns which have been so effectively suppressed by human culture that they persist and reappear only among those few individuals who ignore custom and deliberately follow their preferences in sexual techniques. In some instances, sexual behaviour which is outside the socially accepted pattern, is the more natural behaviour because it is less affected by social restraints."

This last quotation shows what Kinsey & Co. are after. Throughout their report sex is spoken of in terms of "outlet"—it is some irritation within man which he gets rid of in certain ways. The man who gets rid of it most frequently and most variously is to Kinsey the most interesting, and in his cool, unargued way he puts it to his readers that man is an animal who has developed a lot of inhibitions and customs which prevent him from being a thorough-going animal.

It would be a pity if reaction against Kinsey were to have the effect of putting a stop to statistical study of human sex

behaviour. An awful lot of nonsense is talked about sex because so little is known of how people actually behave ; but there is no reason why such study should fall into the hands of animalists or serve, as the Kinsey report does, as powerful propaganda for a view of Man which would, if universally accepted, destroy Humanity. Kinsey and his kind are not really talking about sex behaviour, they are talking about genital organs and reducing all sex to that, a trivialization worse than falsehood.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF BROADCASTING

In May of this year Sir William Haley, Director General of the B.B.C., delivered in the University of Bristol two Lewis Fry Memorial Lectures called *The Responsibilities of Broadcasting*. These lectures, coming as they did from one who has not only directed broadcasting with great distinction, but has thought about it profoundly, ought to be widely read, but are unfortunately so far only available in a limited edition for private individuals. What is notable in them is the absence of quantitative evaluations of success or of any conception that broadcasting is an end in itself. "Broadcasting," says Sir William Haley, "without its responsibilities is nothing. It is not a way of thought, it is not a way of culture, it is not a way of life." Unless those responsible for using it have a sense of public mission, "it will decline from an instrument of social purpose into a some-day-to-be out-moded toy".

Since the lectures are not generally available, we propose to summarize some of Sir William Haley's main points. The first of his lectures deals with the responsibilities of broadcasting within a nation or community, and the second with its responsibilities between nations and communities.

In his first lecture Sir William first deals with the responsibility of a broadcasting system to be impartial. In a democracy both Government and people readily accept the general proposition that broadcasting should be politically impartial. There are certain kinds of impartiality which are improper—as between law and crime, for example, education and illiteracy, insanitation and health. But there are many

subjects on which the community has no such unanimity. A broadcasting system is faced with the alternatives of playing safe and keeping to those topics where decisions have already been made or in which they are regarded as unimportant, which involves it in the risk of becoming dull, stereotyped and meaningless ; or it has to be continually aware of the importance of minorities (which can never be judged by numbers) and to take risks in the interest of preserving life and vigour. In strictly political matters it is much easier to make rules of impartiality, and these have been arrived at by the B.B.C. The King's ministers are allowed to make uncontroversial statements explaining new measures and enlisting national co-operation. In addition, there are twelve party political broadcasts each year, divided between the parties in accordance with the votes cast at the election. The selection of members to give the talks in "the Week in Westminster" and all other appearances by Members at the microphone are regulated by the same ratio. The ratio is six Labour, five Conservative, one Liberal.

Sir William then asks whether, when this principle of impartiality has been decided in politics, a similar decision should be made in the realm of literature, culture and art. This is what some would like—no literary criticism without counter-criticism, no school without its opposite ; and there is constant complaint, he says, that the Left Wing is too prominent in literary criticism. But here Sir William comes out on the side of the rebels, from whom in all the history of art the most stimulating criticism has come, and he would like to see broadcasting (outside strict politics) "seek the best of all schools, with no artificial balancing by numbers".

Sir William notes that preoccupation with public taste is of comparatively recent growth. Nobody thought of improving taste in Shakespeare's day. "Before the war," says Sir William, "broadcasting confronted the listener with the necessity for pendulum-like leaps. The devotees of Berlin (Irving) were suddenly confronted with Bach. Many listeners were won for higher things in this way, but many were irretrievably lost." The recognition that broadcasting

could create, more than any other medium, a "sales resistance" to good music, fine drama and poetry, combined with the exigencies of war-time broadcasting, brought about a complete and remarkable change of policy. Few people realize the skill with which the pyramid of broadcasting programmes is now built up—the gradual gradations within the Light Programme from Variety to Shakespeare. The improvement of public taste in music is generally recognized, but Sir William Haley points out that in this country broadcasts of Euripedes, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Tchekov and Ibsen can now command audiences estimated at from three to five millions.

The third responsibility which Sir William discusses is that of educating. The honourable discharge of the B.B.C.'s duty to schools is well known. In all three programmes—Light, Home Service and Third Programme—the B.B.C. seeks to educate adults, but to retain its licence holders and its finance it must entertain them. It is often thought nowadays that if an educational programme has entertained and amused it has succeeded. But Sir William Haley is not altogether happy about education by entertainment. He says: "It can be roughly said that the more entertainment a discussion gives, the less information it imparts . . . liveliness and power of education often go in almost inverse order." The effect of all the educational programmes of the B.B.C. on those who listen to them is scarcely known, for quantitative sampling methods give no hint of the answer. Yet now and again an outstanding peak is reached. A year ago the B.B.C. gave on eight consecutive evenings straight talks by experts on the subject of Atomic Energy. On no evening did the audience drop below seven million, and on three of them it was over eight million. A large and interesting correspondence showed what valuable educational work had been done.

Lastly Sir William speaks of moral responsibility which, he says, transcends all others. "It is in this field that broadcasting finds listeners most susceptible. Broadcasting is a powerful preceptor in the habits of everyday life."

He goes on to say that broadcasting has "shown many people the art of polite conversation, the possibilities of tolerant discussion, the fact that there are graces in life. . . . It can seek to establish standards and values and to show that the search for truth is endless and an end in itself."

This last is the least satisfying part of Sir William's lecture. Two minutes suffices for him to express an ideal without putting much content into it: what and whose standards and values is broadcasting to seek to establish? That question in our modern society remains always unanswered.

Broadcasting between Nations

The second lecture is on broadcasting between nations and communities—a totally different picture. Judging by practice there are no responsibilities. "Nations hurl at each other insults which in former days would have led to war." International broadcasting was a mushroom growth. Experimental short-wave transmission began in 1927, and in 1932 the first short-wave service in the world came into being in the B.B.C. Empire Service. The Corporation financed this venture though it had no direct financial interest in doing so. Other imperial powers followed our example—the French and the Dutch, and the United States in their "commercial Empire". Then the Germans began their broadcasts to Germans overseas. The first deliberate use of international broadcasting for propaganda purposes was undertaken by Mussolini, and in reply the B.B.C. started its first service in a foreign language in January, 1938; the language was Arabic. Only after Munich did we turn to address Europe.

What is the picture now? Great Britain is the world's chief international broadcaster, followed in order by the United States, Russia, France, Australia, Holland and most other countries of Europe. At whom are these broadcasts aimed? Top of the list are Central and South America, with 305 hours per week; Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Holland, Austria, Switzerland and Hungary receive 286 hours of foreign broadcasting; the Far East and India

216 ; near the bottom of the list come Africa with 49 hours, Russia with 44, and the Pacific with 20.

Can there be any clear mission for the B.B.C. in this welter of competing voices ? Sir William is sure that there is : it is the conscious determination to tell the truth oneself, and thereby to compel others to do the same.

" There is in the world to-day—tired as the peoples are (and the evidence of their tiredness, particularly in Europe, has not been sufficiently studied)—a great hunger for news and a great passion for truth. If the people of a country feel they are not getting the truth from their own broadcasting or their own newspapers they will begin to listen elsewhere. . . . In countries where the truth is withheld even a small number of listeners can disperse it over a surprisingly wide field. The truth is an astonishingly virile ideal. It has the capacity to command passionate loyalties and devotion unto death." This is the policy that Sir William Haley is determined to pursue, but he admits " that it is an easier policy to sustain in war than in peace. In war, the perils are so great that you dare to tell the truth and everyone applauds. In peacetime, issues cloud principles, particularly the kind of peace the world has at present." One of the tests which foreign listeners apply to British broadcasting is to tune in to broadcasts meant for Great Britain itself and find out whether Britain is telling the same story at home and abroad. But Sir William Haley does not mention the criticism of British broadcasting made not by her enemies but by her friends, especially in the United States, where it is often felt that Britain will not deign to explain or defend her position on such matters, for example, as Palestine, but proceeds on the bland and maddening assumption that she is emitting *the* truth.

THE SUPPLEMENT

Dr. Desmond Pond is a young psychiatrist at present working at the Maudsley Hospital (for mental disease), and is a member of the Christian Frontier Council Medical Group.

Kathleen Bliss

ON TRYING TO BE A PSYCHIATRIST

By DESMOND POND

ALTHOUGH this article will be largely concerned with the social and moral problems of a psychiatrist, it is worth mentioning at the outset that, more than practitioners in any other branch of medicine, psychiatrists are up against the fundamental problems of a biological science—the relation of body and mind and the interaction of each on the other—which raise difficult questions of cause and effect. Most psychiatrists would pay lip-service to some theory of neutral monism, that is, that mind and matter were made up of some other “substance”, not reducible to either mind or matter, whose properties can really only be defined in the negative way, namely that they fit in with what we know about two apparent ways we have experience of it—as mind and as matter. Clearly such a doctrine might satisfy our philosophic consciences, but in practice we psychiatrists act upon an uneasy dualistic theory of mind and matter. We gather knowledge about the brain by extensions of the ordinary methods of observation and experiment learned in medical school. We gain further knowledge about mental events from our own introspection, and the statements of patients about their thought processes, and we try and make what sense we can out of the possible relationships between one mental event and another and between mental events (in the mind) and physical events (in the brain).

PRESUPPOSITIONS BEHIND EXPERIMENT

It is a commonplace in the history of science that a hypothesis need not be either logically coherent or philosophically impeccable in order to be fruitful in furthering research. Three great advances in psychiatric treatment have been made in the last twenty years. The first is the production of comas by the use of insulin, perhaps better known in the treatment of diabetes. The second is the induction of convulsions by electric currents.

The third, about which there has already been a great deal of discussion in Christian circles, is the operation of leucotomy, by which certain areas of the brain are cut off from others to produce radical changes of behaviour and character. The present indications for the use of any of these treatments are by no means clear, even to psychiatrists, and consequently it is well-nigh impossible to describe them briefly here. Suffice it to say that the theoretical presuppositions which underlay the original introduction of all these treatments have been proved to be quite false, but already a great deal has been learned about the workings of the mind from the use of these treatments, and very many more advances may be expected from research conducted along such lines.

Yet any psychiatrist who tries to be the Good Physician and treat his patients as men, knows that the limited views such as inspired these empirically discovered physical treatments do not get him far. Judgments about values and morality have constantly to be made, and some idea of the meaning of health must lurk at the back of every intention of the psycho-therapist.

At first sight it would appear that no psychiatrist could possibly do anything if he has to make up his mind about those matters on which there is no agreement at all in our society. But in practice such decisions are relatively easy, and their answer shows up what is a perhaps little recognized danger inherent in the traditional doctor-patient relationship. The doctor is a public servant called on by the patient to relieve symptoms and the patient expects his mode of life to be changed only to the extent of such relief being produced. He emphatically does not expect to be "converted", although the change wrought by treatment might be equivalent, psychologically. The psychiatrist's views on value and morality are, therefore, those of each particular patient with whom he happens at that time to be dealing. The patient's general attitude as to whether there are such things as right and wrong, and if so by what standards they are judged, are the framework in which psychiatrist and patient operate. It is true that very often the psychiatrist has to lead a patient to see that some particular view of a matter he takes arises from reasons quite other than the view of right and

wrong he previously considered to be the operative factor, and so to the patient he appears a-moral, in the sense of being one who does not judge or pass sentence.

The willingness and ability of a person to examine his own fundamental beliefs and attitudes is a necessary step in psychotherapy. Society dictates not only the form of such beliefs and attitudes, but also, mainly through parents' influence on children, provides the repressing force or pressure against changing them in so far as they are unconsciously held—and this applies to most of our beliefs. It is understandable, therefore, that a society which is stable and progressive and founded on a coherent philosophy of life acceptable to the majority, provides a framework for the majority to adjust to and treats the misfits somewhat roughly.

In recent years there has spread a universal doubt and uneasiness about fundamental beliefs so that the social pressure against examining them is relaxed. Thereby the person is relatively defenceless, the ghosts and enemies of a former civilization being no longer potent bad figures on which to project his fears and hates. Agnostic society thus paradoxically creates not only psychiatric disease (rather than the cranks and misfits of former years) but also the possibility of the sufferer allowing himself to be treated. It is easy to forget the implications of treatment which means not only the attainment of some sort of inner harmony, but also the adjustment of the person to the prevalent mores or customs of society. Many of the members of minority groups and "new movements" generally, which help on the progress of society, are just those cranks and misfits which psychiatrists are prone to label with some thinly disguised term of opprobrium, and endeavour to keep from harming or influencing others. Reading the history of psychiatry brings one to the melancholy conclusion that "humane" treatment of mental illness often appears to coincide with periods of social decay. Finally in this connection, it may be noted that the psychiatrist is a sign, and at times a cause as well, of a dangerous trend in society. Personal responsibility may be consciously or unconsciously rejected by the invoking, as scapegoats, of "genes" or "parental mismanagement" on the part of the patient. Such

a thing was common and obvious in the armed forces ; its civil equivalent is a far more dangerous and subtle thing. If one psychiatrist tells a patient bluntly he has no one to blame but himself, he can always find another doctor who will tell him what he wants to hear.

MAN BECOMES A PSYCHIATRIC OBJECT

It can be argued that there is a fundamental difficulty in the acceptance of the whole notion of psychiatry. Unsettling and unhealthy as have been our changed attitudes to the ideas of God, nature and reason, dethroning man from his essential nature, the final degradation is that man has become a psychiatric object, to be treated not as the bearer of disease, but as disease itself. Perhaps more intensely and clearly than any other human study, psychiatry shows up the central problem of to-day—man's nature.

The beginnings of a solution to this problem are to be found in the current philosophical fashion of Existentialism. It is of interest that one of the most eminent psychiatrists of recent years, Karl Jaspers, is now a leading exponent of Existentialism. His views on psychiatry predispose him to the adoption of such a philosophy, for he is sharply critical of all attempts at making the subject more than purely descriptive.

Existentialism represents, as it were, the irreducible minimum of the reinstatement of man—that he has an existence above that of the physical, biological world and that his destiny is in his own hands. Man has to live ; he can, in fact must, choose his way of life. To all the next questions—why and how to live—there is the agnostic answer.

It is fruitful to bring back into this philosophy the Christian elements which it had in its origin in Kierkegaard. But what a world of change is thereby produced ! From the outset we are confronted with the Divine initiative in Revelation. Here is no easy answer to our problem of what is health, but rather a deepening of our understanding of the problem of man meeting with man and with God. The old conception of religion as a good thing, something to be applied like a poultice, is seen in all its shallowness when contrasted with the idea of man's meeting

with God in the I-Thou relation. From the point of view of both doctor and patient there is something dangerous and terrifying in the Grace which flows from meeting God—it is not something that can be directed or canalized, weighed or measured. What both conceive of as the health of the patient may not be at all what God calls us to be or do. God is not interested in health as an end and object of human living—He is able to use the cripple without necessarily throwing away his crutches. The Saint may be a very queer person by our standards, yet more acceptable to God than a slightly smug psychiatrist who has a good reputation among his colleagues.

THE RELIGIOUS FAITH OF THE PSYCHIATRIST

The bringing in of religion appears both to confuse the work of the psychiatrist and to make it more satisfactory. Psychiatrists are confused because when we bring our conventional questions to religion they are left unanswered. We hope religion will give us a blueprint of the perfect society to which our patients can adjust—there is none. We expect—and even more so do our patients—cut and dried answers to problems of evil, right and wrong—but there are no such answers. But we take heart because the mental and spiritual turmoils, of which the symptoms of our patients appear as little whirlpools, are seen to be the very stuff of the Divine plan of Redemption. The psychiatrist is emphatically not a Priest, with particular means of Grace to dispense forgiveness, but the peculiarly intimate doctor-patient relationship of the psychiatrist should be—but how rarely is—an especially pregnant I-Thou relation, a spiritual adventure.

To leave the relation of Christianity to psychiatry in these abstract terms empties it of meaning to most people. To be more specific lands one in a mass of difficulties, not in themselves new, as in many respects they are but facets of the problem of the relation between natural and revealed knowledge. It is already clear that the rather bleak philosophical climate that suits psychiatry is inimical to systems of thought. Imposing philosophical buildings like Thomism are adapted to the more static ages in which they were constructed. The psychiatrist's world is his patient, who has to work out his own philosophy of life, with the psychiatrist as his companion, not his leader. The Christian

doctrine has never been wholly contained within one philosophical formula, although many might think Thomism has achieved this. Likewise the possibilities of human development are too varied to be able to be enclosed in a formula. The egoistic basis which underlies every "rational" thought and action of every person may provide the psychiatrist with ample illustration of the truth of the doctrine of original sin, but it makes him sceptical of most concrete moral judgments made in the name of natural law. He subscribes to many customs of right and wrong for the sake of keeping society together without necessarily believing in their absoluteness.

This attitude may seem nihilistic, if not actually subversive, so it is as well to look on the psycho-therapist's work from a slightly different point of view. He is the guardian, an outpost in the realm of science, of the freedom of the spirit on which in our day Berdyaev has written so eloquently. It is as well to observe that he is not defending freewill against determinism—Berdyaev himself makes this clear. The psychiatrist at no time abandons his belief in determinism, but he comes to see something of the inner quality of being free—to be in possession of oneself. Again we are reminded of the Existentialist insistence on choice.

We have already remarked on the danger of man becoming merely our object, a disease-process in the flux of biological events. The analogous danger in the religious view of man is that it stresses man's absolute unmediated relation to God, which tends to make him an isolated figure, a subject, having no significant relation to other men. The interplay between the metaphysical end of man and his natural life is something which should haunt every decision a psychiatrist takes, and only rarely can he expect to have a cut and dried answer to his problem.

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